



Gluten-Free Alternative Flours for Everyday Baking and Cooking



If you are [gluten-free](#), baking and cooking do not have to mean gloom and doom. You can turn “*ho-hum*” into “*hey-yeah!*” with these celiac-approved gluten-free alternative flours to regular or wheat flour.

Of course, you’ll need to check other baking ingredients, like some baking powders, [chocolates](#), extracts, flavorings, spices and more for gluten-free certification.

Note that some gluten-free flours have more nutrients than others, work better in combination, or require recipe adjustments for taste-worthy end products.

So worth the efforts for texture, taste and delicious experiences! ***Hey-yeah!***

Almond

Almond flour is made from blanched ground almonds. It is nutty and slightly sweet in flavor. Try it in combination with other gluten-free flours, such as brown rice or oat. Almond flour contains calcium, copper, iron, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus,

potassium, vitamin E and monounsaturated fat. It is a low glycemic index food with fewer carbohydrates, prebiotic dietary fiber and protein.

Try almond flour in pastries, especially cakes, cookies and muffins, or to replace bread crumbs.

Amaranth

Amaranth is technically a seed. Amaranth flour has distinctive earthiness and nuttiness and picks up other tastes. It is heavy, so combine with other gluten-free flours, such as almond or quinoa, or leavening agents. Amaranth flour contains admirable amounts of antioxidants, calcium, fiber, iron, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, protein, selenium and vitamins A, C and E.

Try amaranth flour in unleavened breads, as chapatis or tortillas, or as a thickener for sauces, soups and stews.

Arrowroot

Arrowroot flour is versatile for thickening like cornstarch. It does not have to be cooked as long as cornstarch, so it can be added into simmering sauces at the end of cooking. Arrowroot flour can be mixed with other gluten-free flours such as almond, coconut or tapioca. It contains notable amounts of B-vitamins, calcium, fiber, iron, potassium and magnesium with a low glycemic index.

Try arrowroot flour in jellies and fruit fillings for glossiness and silkiness, or to thicken soups and stews, first by creating a “slurry” (mixture of starch + liquid).

Brown Rice

Brown rice flour is whole grain, produced from the entire rice kernel. Its brown color and nuttiness are useful in breading, thickening and roux making. Brown rice flour is frequently combined with other gluten-free flours in noodles and pasta. It contains B-vitamins, calcium, fiber, magnesium, manganese, potassium, protein and lignans (polyphenols with antioxidant and estrogenic activities).

Try brown rice flour in breads, cakes, cookies and pastries for grainy texture and fine, dry crumb, or for making pasta and rotis (aka chapatis).

Buckwheat

Buckwheat, like amaranth and quinoa, is considered a “pseudocereal” because its culinary uses are similar to cereals. Its taste is earthy, “hoppy” and robust. Buckwheat flour has a crumbly texture, so is often combined with other gluten-free flours, like rice, potato or tapioca. It contains folate, iron, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium and zinc, along with fiber, protein and rutin (a polyphenol with anti-inflammatory attributes).

Try buckwheat flour in hearty breads, cakes, muffins, noodles and pancakes, or products paired with baked fruits, caramel, chocolate and nuts.

Cassava

Cassava flour is made by grating, drying and grinding the cassava root. It's mostly carbohydrate like tapioca flour, with resistant starch that acts like fiber. Cassava flour contains more dietary fiber than tapioca flour with fewer calories, provides some protein, is low in fat and contains the B-complex vitamins and vitamin C and K. It has a neutral flavor and while typically coarse, can be fine and light in texture.

Try cassava flour in savory and sweet items as brownies, cupcakes, pancakes, tortillas and waffles, or for breadcrumbs/breading and thickening sauces.

Chestnut

Chestnut flour is light in color with a mellow, sweet taste. It is useful in recipes that do not require rising, like flatbreads, pancakes, pasta or polenta. Since it retains moisture, it may result in softer sweet items. Chestnut flour is high in carbohydrates, low in fats, filled with fiber, calcium, copper, folate and other B-vitamins, iron, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, vitamins A, C and E and zinc.

Try chestnut flour in recipes with almonds, chocolate and honey, or in Italian Tuscan cuisine that includes pasta, polenta, porridge and necci (crepe).

Chickpea

Chickpea flour is made from ground chickpeas. It is popular in Middle Eastern and Indian cooking—sometimes known as besan, gram or garbanzo flour. It may be grainy to dense and fine to smooth depending upon variety; green, tan or brown in appearance and earthy and nutty in taste. It is a good source of fiber, protein, iron, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, zinc and B-complex vitamins.

Try chickpea flour in cookies, quick breads and muffins, as an egg substitute or binding ingredient in fritters and veggie burgers, or thickener in sauces, soups and stews.

Corn

Corn flour, milled from dried whole corn kernels, is a whole grain like brown rice. It has an earthy, sweet flavor and is golden yellow, white or blue in color. Corn flour is different from gritty cornmeal and white, chalky cornstarch. It contains carotenoids (specifically lutein and zeaxanthin) associated with eye health, fiber and protein, along with copper, phosphorus, magnesium, manganese and zinc.

Try corn flour in blinis, breads, muffins, pancakes, tortillas and waffles, as a binding agent for puddings, in breading, or thickener for sauces, soups and stews.

Coconut

Coconut flour is ground and dried coconut “meat”. It has a mild, rich taste and is light in appearance and texture. It may require additional liquid or eggs for moisture and structure. Coconut flour contains fiber, the saturated fatty acid lauric acid (a medium-chain triglyceride associated with LDL-“bad” cholesterol reduction), iron, manganese, potassium, phosphorus, selenium, vitamin B6 and protein.

Try coconut flour in breads, cakes, cookies, frostings, muffins, pancakes and waffles, or for binding and thickening sauces, gravies, soups and stews.

Millet

Millet flour is stone ground and whole grain. It tastes subtly sweet, looks creamy and feels light. It is more nutritious than other gluten-free flours, so it is often mixed with potato, rice or tapioca flour. Millet flour contains antioxidants (chiefly the phenolic compounds ferulic acid and catechins), calcium, essential amino acids, soluble fiber, magnesium, manganese and phosphorus.

Try millet flour in breads like roti, traditional leavened cakes, cookies and muffins (it pairs nicely with chocolate and honey), or with noodles, pasta and pizza.

Oat

Oat flour is a whole grain made from whole ground oat groats. It tastes subtly sweet, nutty and toasty, with chewy and crumbly texture. Oat flour lends moisture to baked goods that yield soft and fluffy textures. It contains beta-glucan, a soluble fiber associated with lowering LDL-“bad” cholesterol, blood sugar and insulin levels, antioxidants, B-vitamins, magnesium, manganese and protein.

Try oat flour in biscuits, breads, brownies, cakes, cookies, muffins, pancakes, pie crusts and waffles, like bran muffins, carrot cake, oatmeal cookies and zucchini bread, as a thickener or to replace bread crumbs.

Potato

Potato flour is made from finely ground peeled and trimmed potatoes as opposed to potato starch that is mostly carbohydrates. Potato flour attracts and holds water that creates moist products with tender “crumb”—especially when blended with other gluten-free flours, such as rice. It contains B-vitamins such as niacin and thiamin, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and vitamin C, with fiber and protein.

Try potato flour in biscuits, breads, pancakes and waffles, for coating batter, dumplings and pastry crusts, or to thicken gravies, sauces and soups.

Quinoa

Quinoa flour is technically derived from seeds, though classified as whole grain. It has an unique earthy and nutty taste—more pronounced when it is mixed with other

ingredients and seasonings. Quinoa flour is a complete protein high in lysine (usually lacking in plants), with copper, fiber, folate, iron, manganese, magnesium, phosphorus and zinc.

Try quinoa flour in biscuits, cakes, pancakes, pastries and waffles, along with fruits, nuts, ground cardamom, cinnamon, cumin, coriander or rosemary.

Sorghum

Sorghum flour is an ancient grain with light color, smooth texture and mild, sweet flavor. It is dense and somewhat sour, so it typically requires other gluten-free flours like corn, millet, rice or potato in combination. It often substitutes for oat flour. Sorghum flour contains antioxidants, B-vitamins, fiber, iron, niacin, phosphorus, thiamine and protein, and is low glycemic and rich in antioxidants.

Try sorghum flour in brownies, cookies, cakes, flatbreads (as Indian roti), pancakes, porridges, sweet breads and waffles, often with a binder like xanthan gum.

Tapioca

Tapioca flour is made from starchy liquid found in cassava root. It is very mild in taste and off-white in color. Tapioca flour is popular in recipes that require gelling or thickening. It is mostly carbohydrate with little-to-no fiber, micronutrients or protein. The starch is “resistant to digestion” since it acts like fiber. As a result, tapioca flour may help appetite, blood sugar and insulin responses and digestion.

Try tapioca flour in candies, jams, jellies, pie fillings and puddings for thickening, bubble or boba tea in tapioca “pearls”, or for binding and stabilizing.

Teff

Teff flour is made from a small tropical ancient whole grain. It ranges in color from white-to-brown with red in between. Lighter colored teff flour is milder and sweeter, while darker colored is stronger. Teff flour contains calcium, copper, fiber, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, selenium, vitamins B6 and C, zinc and protein—particularly lysine, with resistant starch and low glycemic index.

Try teff flour in cakes, cookies, flatbreads (as Ethiopian injera, a fermented pancake-like bread), muffins, pasta (as egg noodles), pancakes and puddings.

White Rice

White rice flour is made from ground polished rice. It is almost tasteless, has a fine light texture, adds fluffiness to baked goods and can be baked without companion flours, unlike brown rice flour. White rice flour is rich in carbohydrates and protein and low in fat, with fewer vitamins and minerals than whole grain brown rice flour, but it can be enhanced by combining with buckwheat flour, eggs or whey.

Try white rice flour in breads and breading, cakes, cookies, Eastern-style dumplings and noodle varieties, or for thickening gravies, sauces and soups.

What a wide assortment of gluten-free flours—all with distinct functions and flavors! Some are tastier, wholesome and more nutritious than others. The best flour combinations vary according to recipes, uses, oven temperatures, times and “unforeseeable factors”.

See my blog [TasteOverTime](#) [GLUTEN-FREE Primer and Protector](#) for more information about what a gluten-free diet entails!

Me? I favor the tastiest of the bunch—the ones that are earthy, nutty and whole grain to match my changing [TasteOverTime](#). Gluten-free or otherwise!

Hey-yeah!

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